

Defining Impact on Student Learning in Proficiency-Based K-12 Systems

**Results of the 2021
UVM Department of Education
Vermont Educator Preparation Survey**

Additional Reporting for CAEP Standard 4.1 – Impact
on P-12 Student learning and Development



The University of Vermont

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Acknowledgements

This report is possible because P-12 principals across Vermont agreed to share the survey with teachers, and teachers agreed to take the survey. Faculty and staff in the University of Vermont's Educator Preparation Programs are extremely grateful to Vermont educators for sharing of their time, reflections, and suggestions.

This report was prepared by the University of Vermont Department of Education. For questions or comments, please contact doeaanda@uvm.edu.

Survey Purpose

The purpose of the Vermont Educator Preparation survey is to gather information about how Vermont teachers define impact on student learning in proficiency-based systems. This survey is part of data collection for national accreditation of educator licensure programs at the University of Vermont, and results inform improvement of program quality. *The focus of this report is results from UVM alumnx who completed initial licensure programs from 2015-2020.* Results from all survey respondents are presented in Appendix A.

Our overall objective is to answer this primary question—How do teachers define impact on student learning in a proficiency-based system?

Sub-questions include:

- How do alumnx define student growth in a proficiency-based system?
- How do they implement principles of proficiency-based systems in their classrooms?
- What types of assessments do alumni develop and use in a proficiency-based system?
- How do school structures/policies support or interfere with implementation?
- How effective are proficiency-based systems for all students (e.g., students with special needs and ELLs)?

Background

In June 2013, the state of Vermont passed legislation in Act 77 which requires schools to develop personalized learning plans (PLPs) for each student in grades 7-12 that include flexible pathways to graduation. Flexible pathways include options like work-based learning, service-learning, and dual enrollment. This type of system requires a shift to proficiency-based education because student progress toward graduation is no longer based on seat time and grades. In this new paradigm, students navigate through middle and high school based on their attainment of skills and knowledge identified as proficiencies. These proficiencies are developed by each school district in alignment with Vermont's Education Quality Standards.

The shift to proficiency-based education has been a complex undertaking for schools in Vermont. Though the requirement for personalized learning plans is specific to grades 7-12, the shift to proficiency-based systems is happening across all grade levels and content areas. The survey is our Selected Improvement Plan (for our national accreditation) to deepen our understanding of how UVM educator preparation program alumnx impact their students' learning in proficiency-based systems. The research findings will be used to improve how we prepare future teachers to effectively teach in a proficiency-based system.

Survey Development

The survey design process followed guidelines for development of high-quality survey instruments recommended by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014). This included review in fall 2016 of existing literature on proficiency-based systems, including a survey featured in an American Institutes of Research study on teacher practices in proficiency-based education models (Haynes, et.al, 2016). This review informed the development of our survey framework which is aligned to our Selected Improvement Plan goals and objectives. It also informed, development of items for the initial survey draft. Three University of Vermont (UVM) educator preparation faculty participated in cognitive interviews about the initial draft, and their responses and comments informed revisions of survey items and structure. The survey was then piloted with two in-service Vermont educators who have expertise in proficiency-based learning and was again refined based on their feedback.

The 2018 version of the survey was sent only to 2013 and 2014 alumnx of UVM educator preparation programs who we were able to confirm were employed in Vermont schools in the 2017-2018 academic year. In Spring 2021, we expanded the survey population to include all licensed teachers in Vermont, and therefore added questions about the year and institution of initial licensure. We also added questions about opportunity to learn about proficiency-based systems during and after initial licensure. The survey items are available in Appendix B.

Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method* (4th edition). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Haynes, E., Zeiser, K., Surr, W., Hauser, A., Clymer, L., Walston, J., Bitter, C., & Yang, R. (2016) *Looking under the hood of competency-based education: The relationship between competency-based education practices and students' learning skill, behaviors, and dispositions*. Washington, DC: American Institutes of Research.

Survey Structure

The survey's 31 questions are organized into seven sections aligned with the study questions. These sections are:

- About You
- Teaching Context
- Defining Impact
- Implementing Proficiency-Based Education
- Assessment in Proficiency-Based Education
- School Structures and Supports
- Suggestions for Educator Preparation Programs

The chevron graphic below is a navigation tool for this report. The black bar indicates which section of the survey is represented in the data displays.



Data Collection

Data were collected using an online survey with both open-ended and closed-response items. The first iteration of the survey was administered in Spring 2018.

This report focuses on results of the second version of the survey, which was administered in February and March 2021 using the Qualtrics survey platform at UVM. In February 2021, we asked Vermont P-12 principals to distribute a survey link to all licensed teachers in their schools. In the email request we described the purpose of the survey and asked that in addition to sharing the link with teachers, that they also confirm the link was distributed and include the number of teachers who received the link so that we could calculate a response rate. We sent a reminder email in March 2021. Invitations were sent to 292 principals, 77 of whom responded.

Response Rate

Based on principal responses to our request that they distribute the survey link, we estimate that 2600 Vermont teachers (of approximately 7240 teachers working in Vermont schools (<https://www.publicschoolreview.com/vermont/burlington-school-district/5002820-school-district>) had opportunity to complete the survey.

Of those, 365 entered the survey, and 269 who identified as licensed to teach in Vermont responded beyond the initial screening question. These 269 respondents represents a little over **10% of teachers who had opportunity to complete the survey**. Based on the distribution strategy and response rate, it is unlikely that survey results are generalizable to all Vermont teachers. However, the results add to our evolving understanding of how teachers are responding to policy that requires broad implementation of proficiency-based learning.

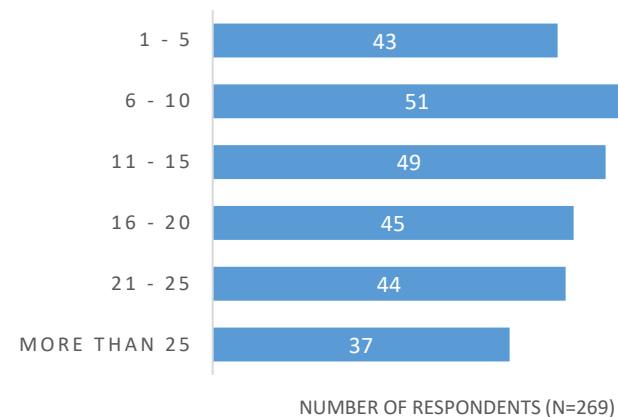
Respondent Characteristics

Of the 269 who identified as licensed to teach in Vermont, the year of initial licensure ranged from 1965 to 2020, and years teaching (including 2020-2021) ranged from 1 to 56.

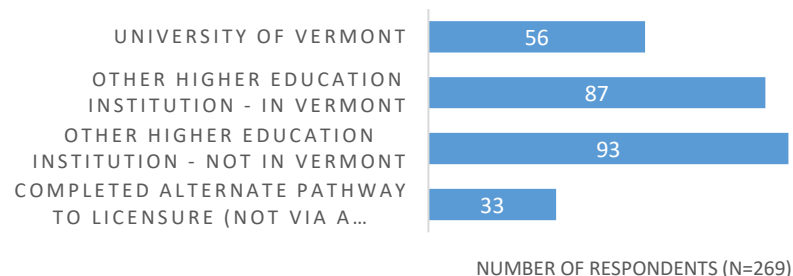
Approximately 20% of respondents completed initial licensure preparation at the University of Vermont, 32% completed at other higher education institutions in Vermont, and 35% completed at higher education institutions outside Vermont. 12% followed an alternative pathway to licensure.

Additional information about survey respondents can be found in Appendix A.

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU WORKED AS A TEACHER, INCLUDING THIS YEAR?



AT WHAT COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY DID YOU COMPLETE YOUR INITIAL EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM?



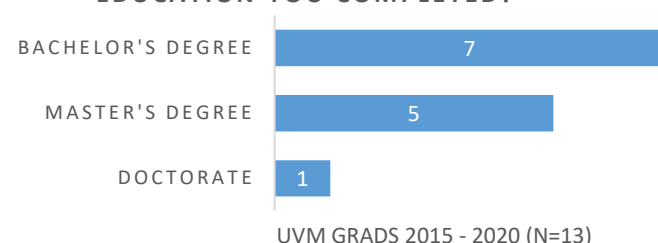
UVM Licensure Program Alumnx 2015-2020 (n=13)

Recent UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020 (n=13)

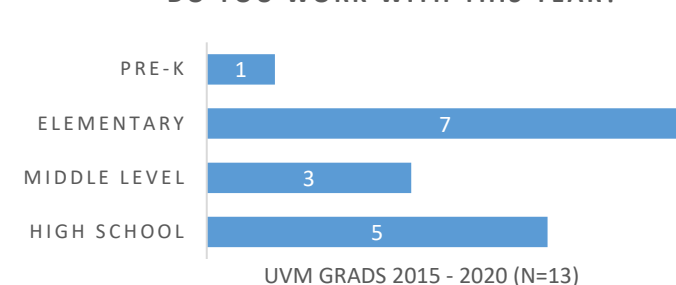
This report focuses on responses from UVM alumnx who completed educator preparation programs since the 2013 passage of legislation and new rules in Vermont that mandate proficiency-based learning in grades 7-12.

While this group represents only 5% of survey respondents, it experienced the most recent iterations of UVM educator preparation programs. As show in the charts, these respondents represent both undergraduate and graduate programs, had at least some opportunity to learn about proficiency-based education in their preparation, and work at all PreK-12 levels across content areas.

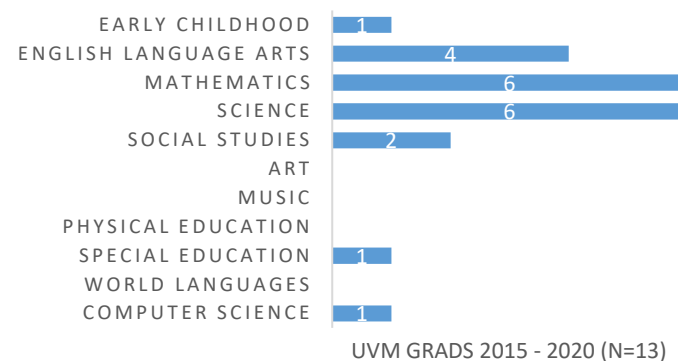
WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU COMPLETED?



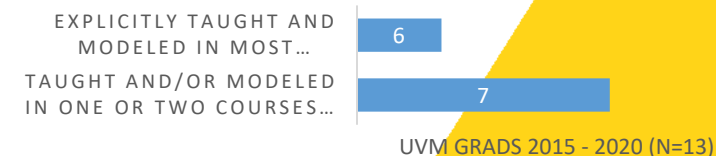
WHICH AGE GROUP(S) OR GRADE LEVEL(S) DO YOU WORK WITH THIS YEAR?



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PRIMARY CONTENT TEACHING AREA(S)?



TO WHAT EXTENT DID YOU OR DID YOU NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT PROFICIENCY-BASED SYSTEMS DURING YOUR PREPARATION FOR LICENSURE?



UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020 (n=13)

Recent UVM alumnx report *knowing when their students are learning* when their students are engaged, show progress on assessments, and make connections across contexts.

Perform skills with content, or apply old skills to new situations.

Data gathered from formative and summative assessment suggests students are making progress towards learning targets

They can show me or tell me how they understand the skill.

They can show me their thinking.

They reach out for help

They participate in class

They are engaged and curious.

They are able to make connections and apply critical thinking to a task.

They demonstrate to me that they can produce their second language, either written, spoken, or hear a second language based on what they currently know.

They are engaged and having well thought group discussions

They can independently apply a taught strategy across contexts. Or when they can go back and correct their own mistakes with or without prompting.

They complete formative and summative assessments

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020 (n=13)

Recent UVM alumnx define “*student leaning*” as internal motivation and drive to learn; deepening knowledge, understanding, and skill; application or use of new knowledge.

They have a deep understanding of a skill.

It means understanding a process and being able to problem solve.

Growing in knowledge and ability to apply skills to in context and out of context situations.

To me, student learning means student academic achievement as measured by classroom assessment as well as social emotional gains also measured by classroom assessment.

In science we have the NGSS 3-D learning. Student learning to me really means they can describe cross-cutting concepts like mathematical patterns or cause/effect in a science and engineering practice like developing a model or writing a CER.

Student learning is a relationship between a student and a teacher to help said student understand and use the concept, material or knowledge that is presented or instructed. Much of student learning depends on where students are currently at, and then a demonstration of being able to use that knowledge as well as potentially going slightly beyond that initial production of learning.

Student learning means that students are working through challenging concepts to have a deeper understanding.

Student learning means that students are gaining something new, whether that be knowledge or an experience.

When a student is Interested in learning more and pushes themselves to learn.

The ability to recognize concepts and apply skills in new situations, both in and out of the classroom.

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020 (n=13)

Recent UVM alumnx know whether their instruction is making a positive difference for student learning when students actively engage in learning activities, feel good about their learning experiences, and show progress on assessments.

I know that my instruction is making a positive difference for student learning when they show up to class and participate. Especially for students who are attending school virtually, I know that it is easier to "hide" when they are at home. For some students, just logging in to the Google Meet is a win. I also gave my students end of course surveys, so I have their responses as a more concrete reflection of making a positive difference.

I know my instruction is making a positive difference on student learning by comparing student performance on diagnostic assessment with data gathered from formative assessment throughout the instruction and summative assessment at the end of instruction. If the comparisons indicate movement towards a learning target, I know my instruction is making a positive difference.

I am making a positive impact when students are able to complete high level work with more independence. As the year progresses I provide less scaffolding on our work and I know students are learning when they no longer need the same amount of structure and scaffolding as the beginning of the year.

I know that my instruction is making a positive difference when my students progress in their proficiency and thus their ability to use the language in a variety of ways.

They leave with a feeling of accomplishment or wanting to ask more questions.

By the data in the assessment and the quality of their work.

Conversation is a big thing in my classroom.

When I see that a strategy is being applied with fidelity independently in the general education classroom.

Increases in performance metrics (ex: improvement on rubric, other grading criteria)

Student conversation (ex: said to a peer - "This was that term from that class.")

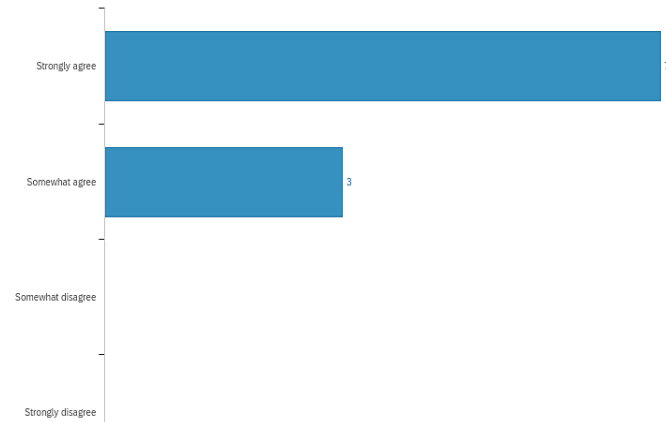
Formative assessments and critically analyzing student data.

Observation (ex: more self-direction in assignment two vs assignment one).

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based educational practices.

I provide clear written and/or verbal learning targets (or learning objectives) for my students.



I provide clear performance expectations (written and/or verbal) for my students.



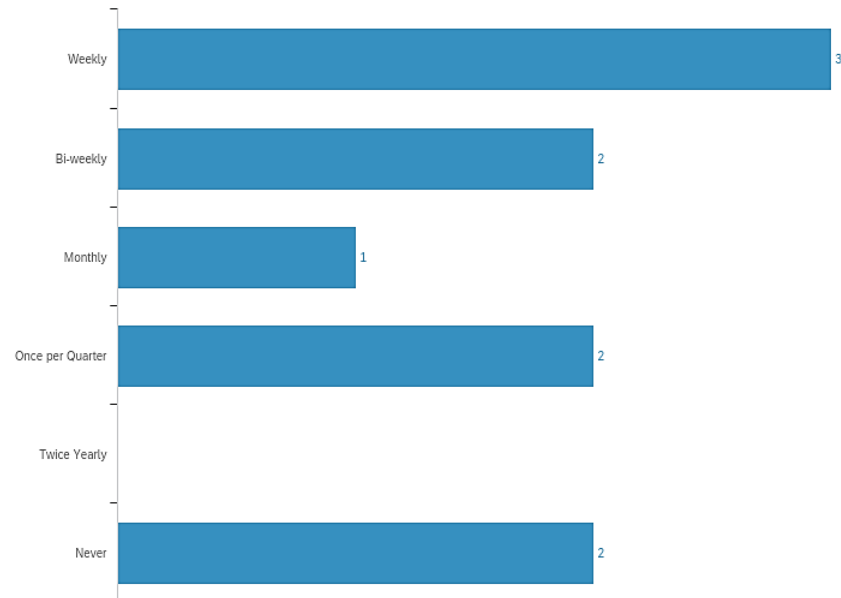
My students need to demonstrate proficiency on a specific set of learning targets (or learning objectives) to move forward to the next learning opportunity.



UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based educational practices. (continued)

Typically, I meet with individual students regarding their progress:



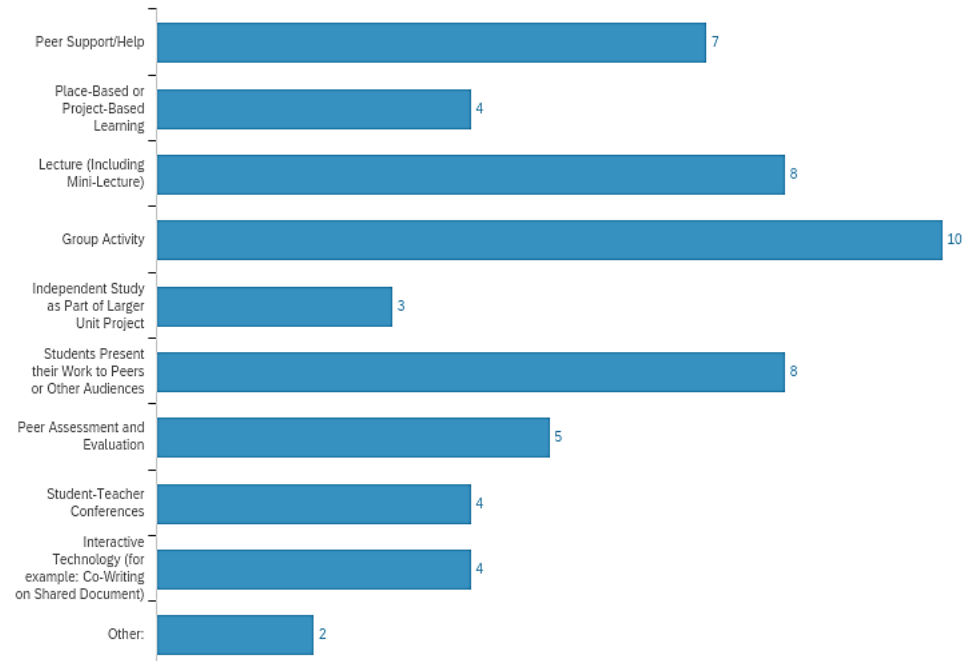
My students co-design with me their own learning experiences:



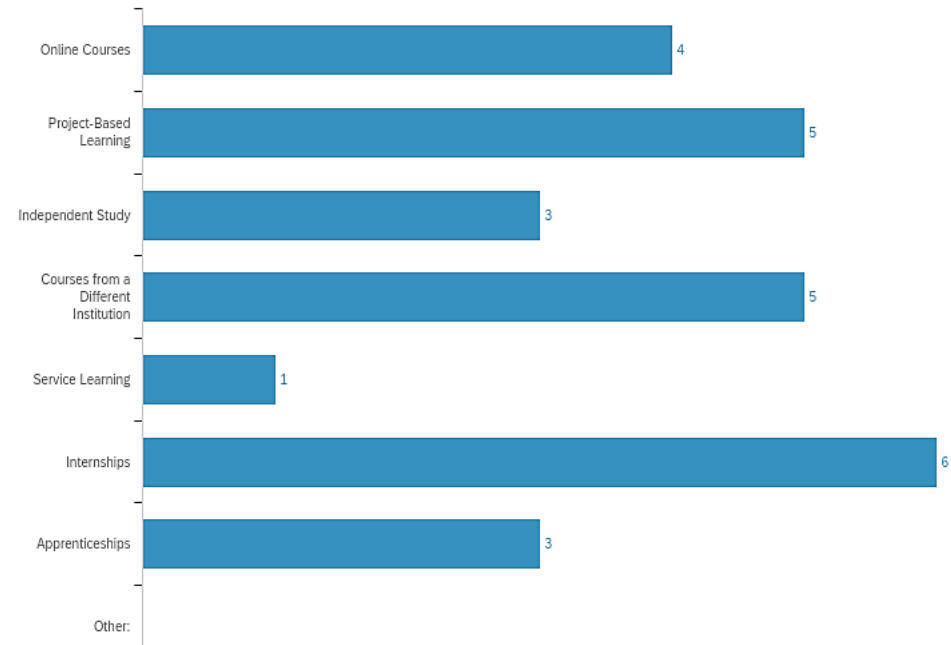
UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based educational practices. (continued)

Typically, I use the following instructional practices at least once per week:



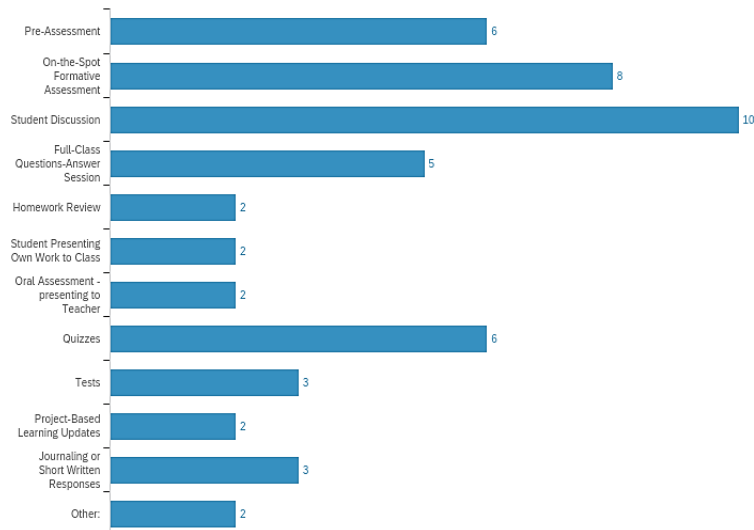
At my school it is possible for students to demonstrate proficiency through flexible pathways including:



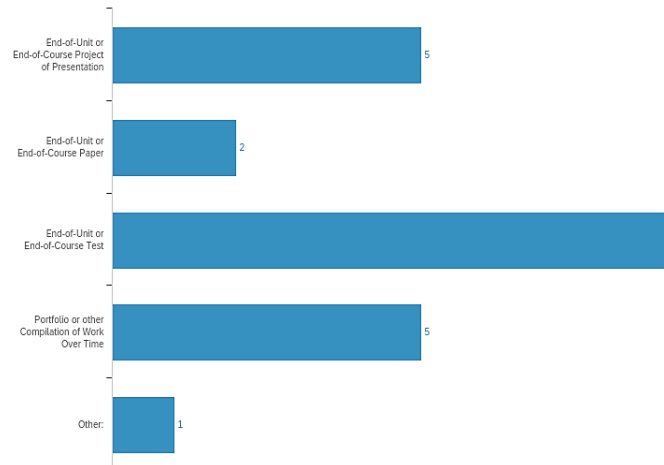
UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based assessment practices.

Typically, I use the following strategies to assess student learning at least once a week:



My students demonstrate proficiency through:



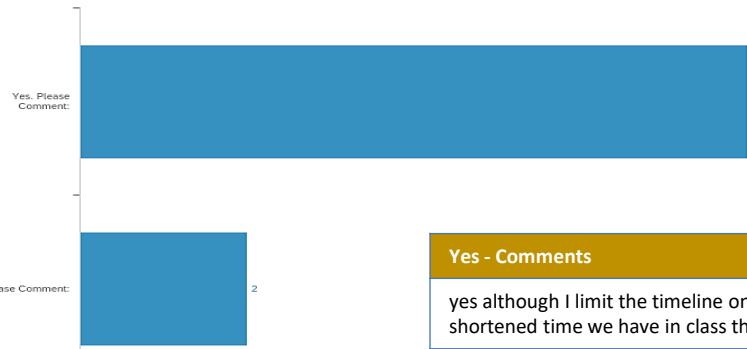
My students design their own demonstrations of proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc):



UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based assessment practices. (continued)

My students are allowed to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency:



Yes - Comments

yes although I limit the timeline on this because of the shortened time we have in class this year due to COVID-19

Students are given the chance to re-do assignments with support

I don't take away the opportunity to show learning.

Sometimes they can resubmit the same assignment and sometimes they complete a new assignment with the same standards to re-assess.

All work except habits of work grades

Student's must reach proficiency in the chosen standards in order to pass the class. They can continue to work towards proficiency until the course is over (i.e at the end of the year).

Students are able to retake learning targets.

I may not use the same exact work but they can redo the skill.

No - Comments

not necessary in K

Never outside of my small groups. Students are able to correct their own work in my groups, but I have never seen this happen in the general education classroom.

I use the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of the learning pathway, to evaluate all students:



Yes - Comments

Yes although some are modified for some students

All students are held to the same expectations.

Consistency

Learning scales are (hopefully) designed to be flexible so that they can be used to evaluate students learning regardless of the learning pathway.

We have proficiency scales for each learning target.

No - Comments

Advanced Placement Classes are content-based standards compared to skill-based standards.

For some students I focus more on the SEPs and CCCs than the DCIs in science. (More on the cross-cutting concepts and science practices than the content standards.)

I use standards and performance expectations based on their individual educational plans.

Each student can be assessed differently in my class.

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

Recent UVM licensure program alumnx are implementing proficiency-based assessment practices. (continued)

I use the same standards and performance expectations to evaluate all of my students, including English and/or dual language learners and students on plans:



No - Comments

I have not had an English language or dual language learners.

I modify the expectations for students with intensive needs although I try to maintain the rigor of the standard as much as possible

Again I use their IEPs and my professional knowledge to evaluate each student

Everyone is different

Yes - Comments

Yes see above

Science practices allow differentiation based on these factors.

No ELL Students

My students are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway:



No - Comments

No, I should do this but have not been shown this in practice so it's harder for my to conceptualize

Some of my students are involved in tracking their own progress, but not all.

Yes - Comments

Individualized Learning Plans with time in class to update them.

We use powerschool although there are limits to using this to track progress.

Students regularly are involved with tracking their own learning progress. Often this is done by asking students to check proficiency scores (or they are given to them) and assess what their next steps are to reach proficiency.

Our grading system, Jumprope, tracks progress for students.

They do check ins with peers and myself. They can let me know how they are doing

Individualized Learning Plans with time in class to update them.

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

School policies or practices that recent UVM licensure program alumnx say support their implementation of proficiency-based practices.

Supporting Policies and/or Practices

Non-mandatory curriculum	Scientific Skills Practices for graduation requirements	Realistic goals for yearly expectations regarding PBGR development
Intervention and MTSS	NGSS continuing training	Co-planning curriculum
None. We are on our own to do this.		
Availability of instructional coaching from in school coaching (math, literacy and general instruction) as well as science specific instructional coaching (hired) from outside the district	Regular professional development during staff meetings and in service	Protected time during the school day specifically for PLCs to analyze and react to student data
Ability to retake assessments	Separated academic and non-academic grades	Feedback cycles
Responsive Classroom	Learning Targets	

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020

School policies or practices that recent UVM licensure program alumnx say inhibit their implementation of proficiency-based practices.

Inhibiting Policies and/or Practices

Inconsistent messaging about pathways and course work.		
Lack of understanding of proficiency learning	Different ideas about when to collect data (start with 1s early in unit or only assess when students are able to get to a 3.)	Time with all the additional protocols this year
None.		
Lack of time specifically dedicated towards curriculum development (differentiation, etc.)	Almost a complete lack of preparatory time during the day. It's often hard to focus on anything but "survival".	
Time still tied to semester/full school year schedules.		
Little reflective supervision	Not modeled to teachers or expected of them	Inflexible groupings and little intervention time built in. Very lecture based teaching practices.

UVM Licensure Program Alumnx – 2015-2020 (n=13)

Suggestions recent UVM alumnx have for educator preparation programs:

One important facet of PBE that was how varied standards are from school to school. More exemplars of how day-day teaching of standards integrated into graduation requirements would have been helpful. Because it seems like every school does things differently, the aim shouldn't be to chronicle all forms of PBE, but rather to expose students to the categories of PBE standards, such as skill vs content standards, sequential vs non-sequential standards, and single class vs multi-class standards (i.e., you show certain standards in select classes vs showing any standard in any class).

Perhaps specifically introducing pre-service teachers to concepts from Hattie's Visible Learning. I feel that we often focus so much time and effort on teaching strategies that matters little in terms of student achievement (i.e. grading that involves writing feedback on every single students paper) when that time could be dedicated to strategies that have a much larger impact. Grading that way, for example, works in a traditional grading system but when all students must reach proficiency the inefficacy of the strategy really shows up.

Model it, model it, model it. Teach the teachers the way you want them to teach. Lecturing about how to teach in a proficiency-based way is more harmful than helpful. Bake student agency and choice into teaching programs and you will prepare teachers to do the same in their own classrooms. Make sure that proficiency-based expectations are not just around homework, but truly part of what happens in the classroom as well. Teaching a class that is lecture based with set trajectories and ways to respond while in class, but having choice outside of the classroom is not enough. Expectations need to be set that proficiency-based and learning objectives are a consistent thread through the syllabus, learning experiences and outside work, not just one aspect of the course. Honestly this could be better modeled in how programs are structured as a whole as well, but it involves active feedback and a better mentoring system to support that same work by the teachers.

We need a clearer idea of proficiency-based systems. When do we start collecting data? How do we manage student's social-emotional learning if we collect 1's on assessments at the beginning of a unit as they build knowledge? How do we get 3 authentic pieces of evidence for each standard? What does it look like to do incorrect proficiency based grading?

As a UVM M.A.T. alum, most of the preparation was directly applicable and indeed essential for implementation of PBE systems.

I would suggest more work with making on the spot changes when things are not working. How to pivot and adapt in the moment both with a lesson and class social situations.

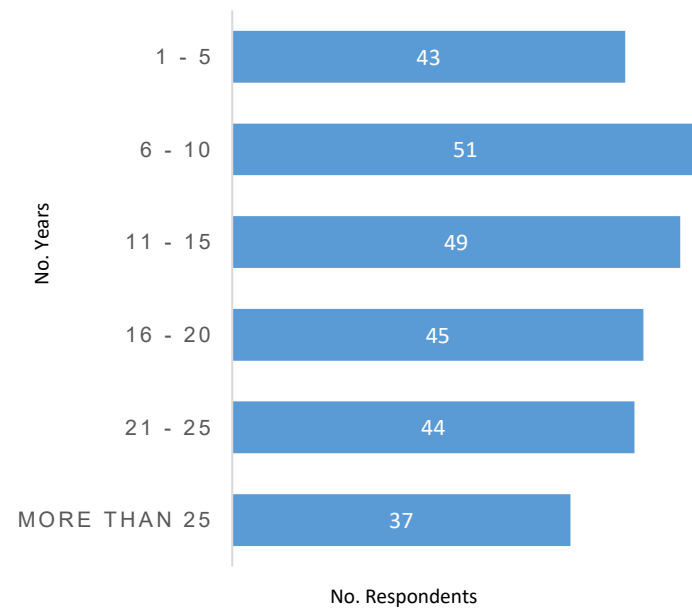
Come see what we're doing at _____! I feel very strongly that our proficiency based grading system is high quality and should be a model for other schools.

Explain differentiation more

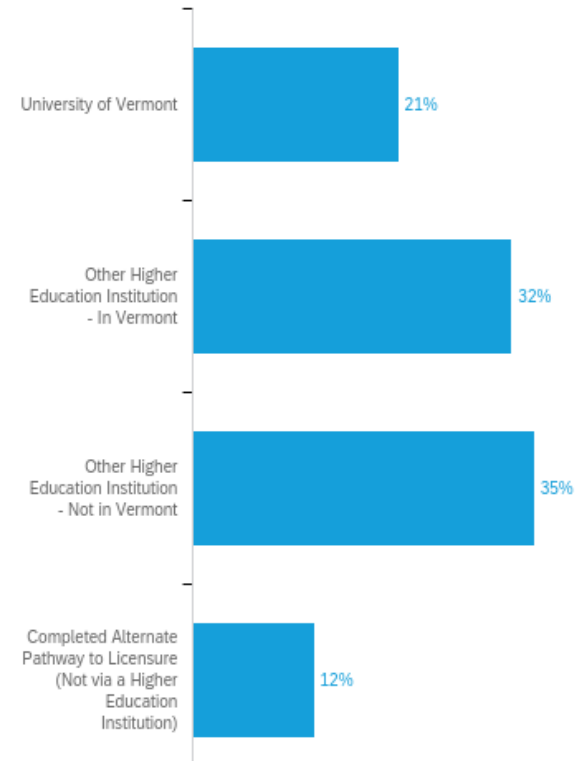
Appendix A: Results – All Respondents

Results: All Respondents (n=269)

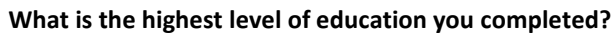
How many years have you worked as a teacher, including this year?



At what college or university did you complete your initial educator preparation program?



What is the highest level of education you completed?

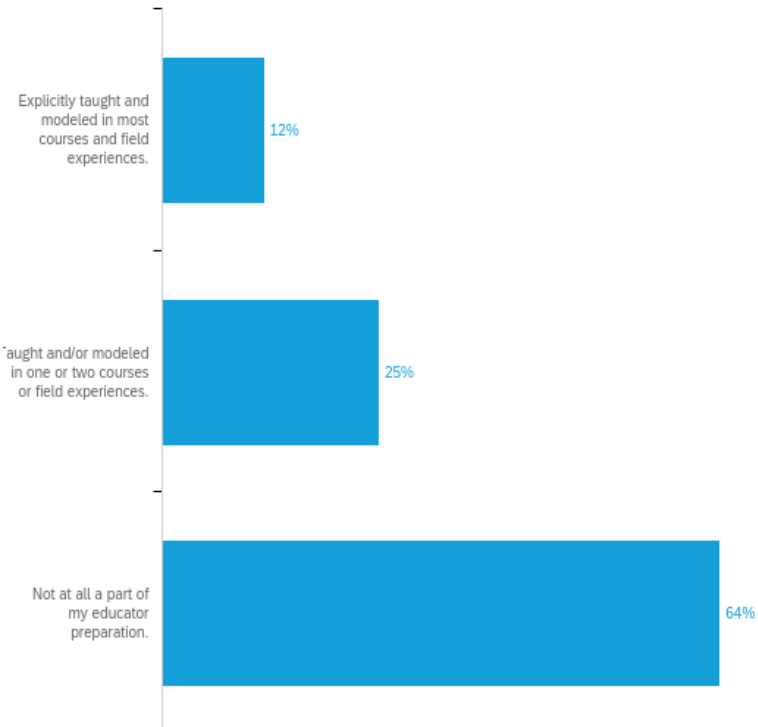


1st

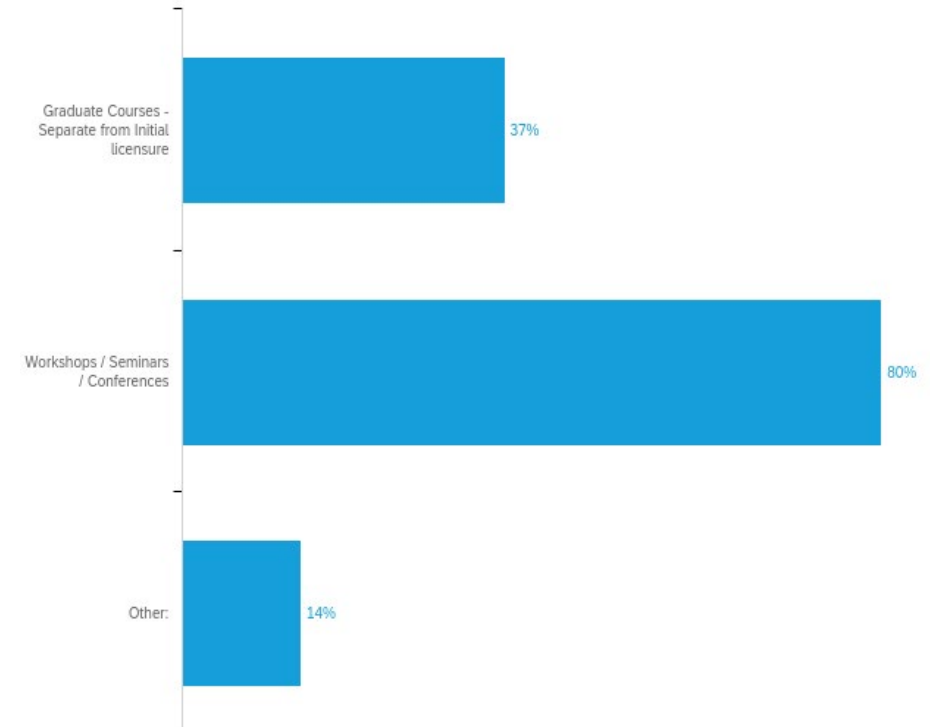


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

To what extent did you or did you not have opportunity to learn about proficiency-based systems during your preparation for licensure?

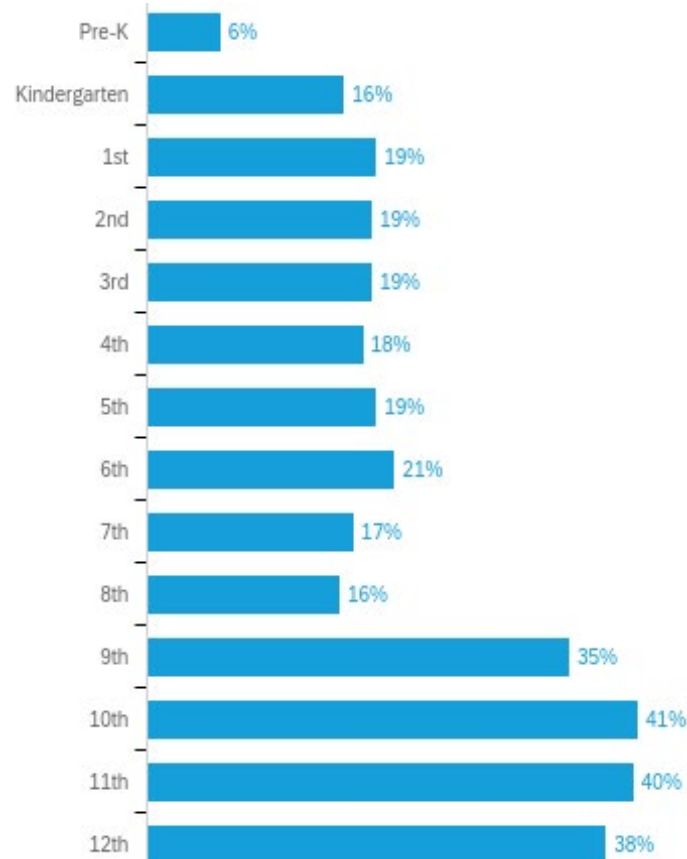


Beyond school or district sponsored opportunities, what, if any, professional learning about proficiency-based education have you undertaken? (Select all that apply)

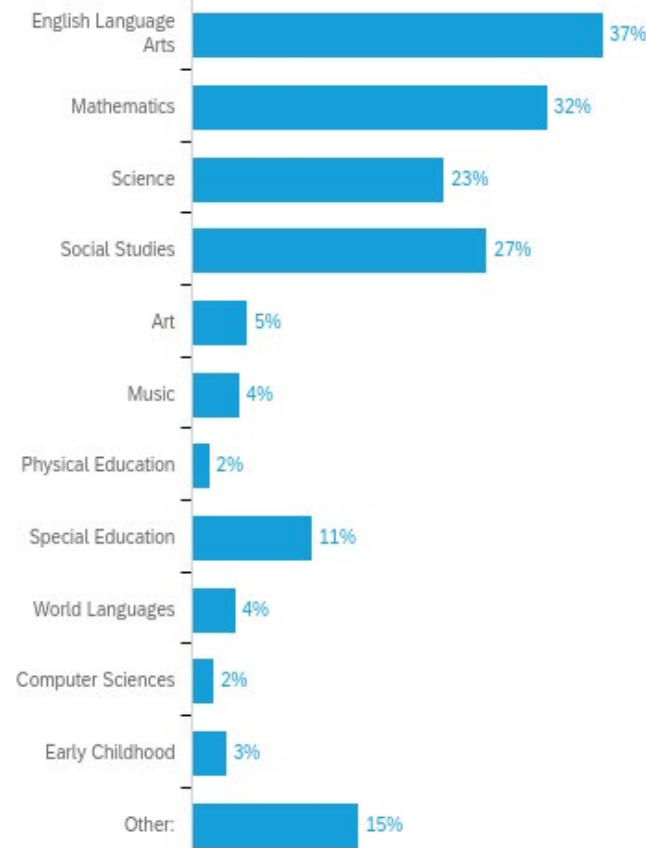


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

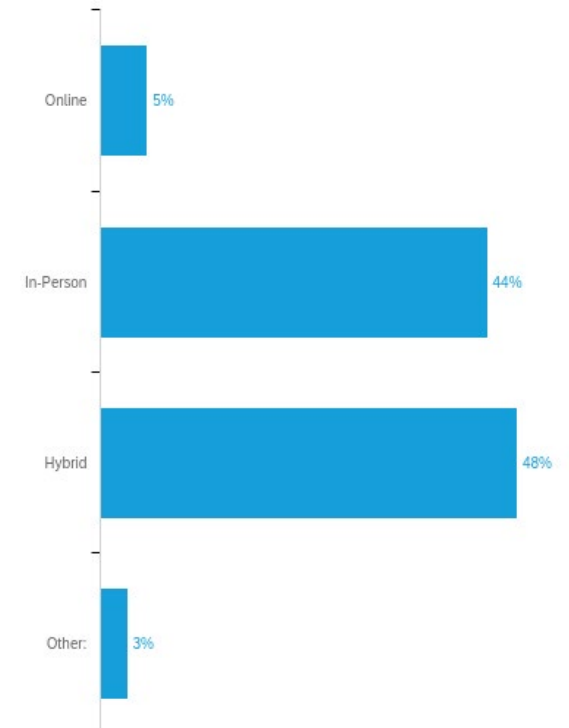
Which age group(s) or grade level(s) do you work with this year? (Select all that apply)



Which of the following best describes your primary teaching area(s)? (Select all that apply)

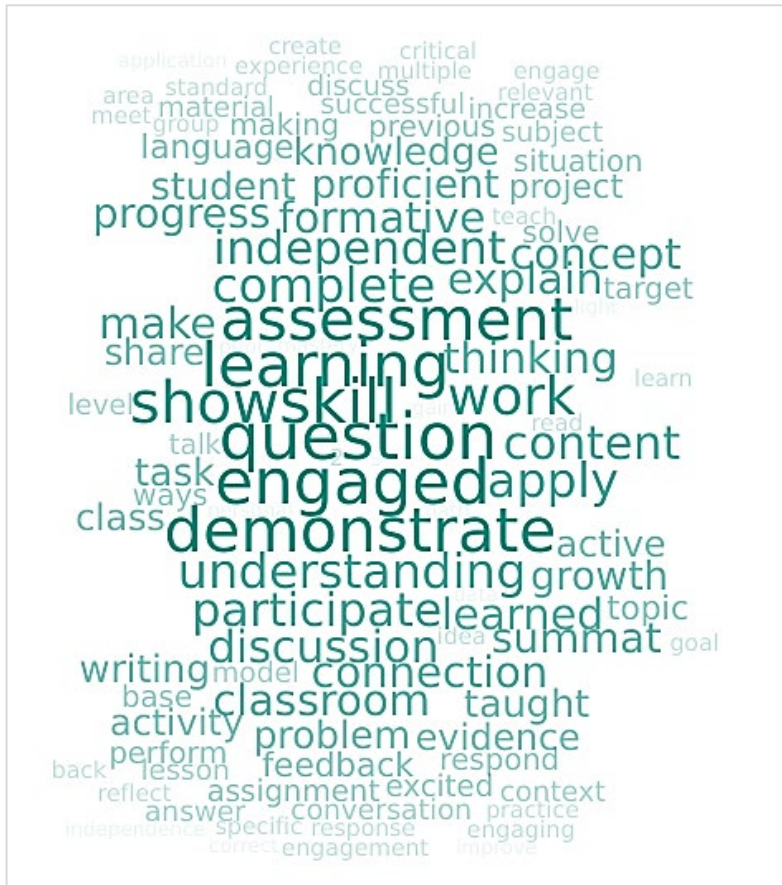


What is your primary teaching mode this year?



Results: All Respondents (n=269)

Please complete the following sentence: I know my students are learning when:



*They are excited to participate.
They feel safe at school.*

*They are able to demonstrate
proficiency according to the rubrics*

*They are asking questions and participating
in large or small group sessions.*

*they are gaining increased independence in
completing performance indicator tasks...*

*they are able to complete the learning tasks that I
have created as evidence of the standard*

*They are making meaning of the content through their
own representations (writing, models, projects, etc)*

*They use evidence to back up claims and analyze the evidence
in a way to show it supports the claim they are making*

*They are engaged, they ask questions and behave.
They especially are focused when they know it leads to
an activity or project where they need to perform.*

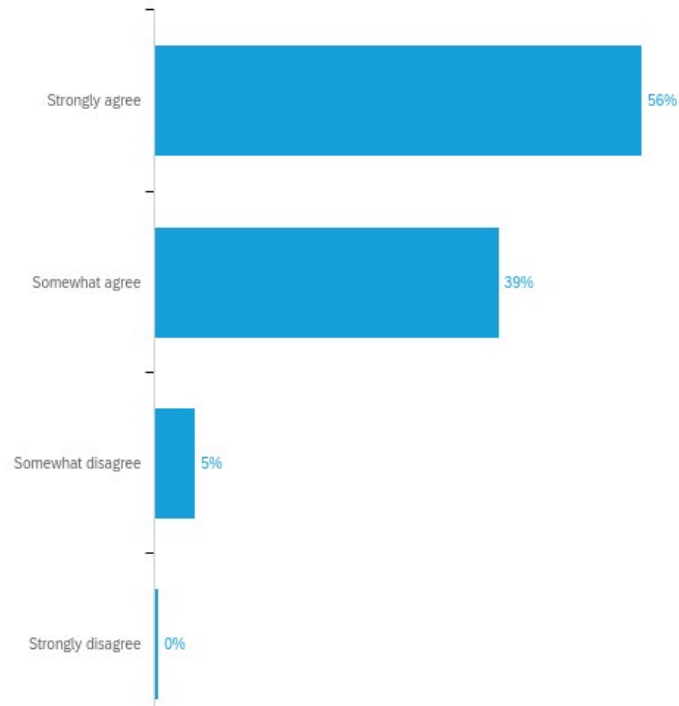
*...they demonstrate new skills and make connections between
new material and prior learning or their personal experiences.*

*They produce previous targets of instruction spontaneously in
discourse, # correct independent responses increases over time,
intelligibility measurably improves, # syllables stuttered decreases, or
other measure according to student's goals.*

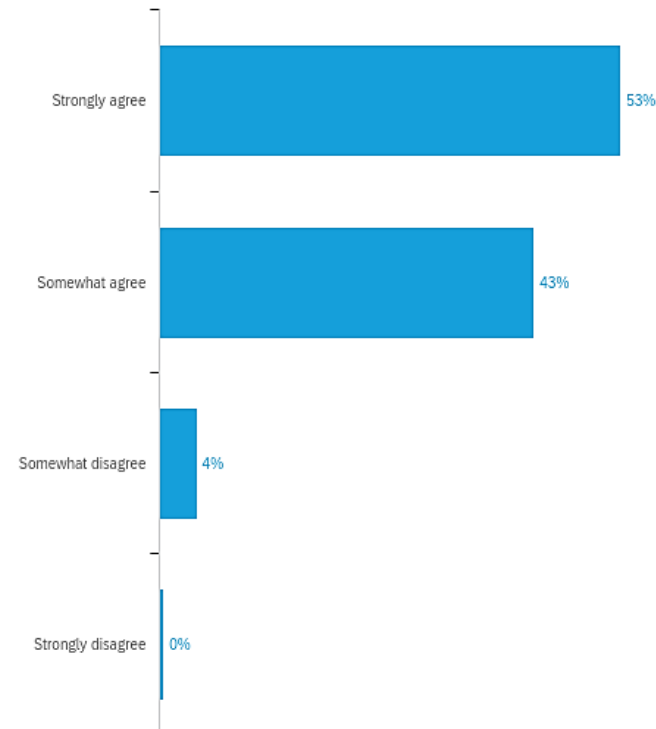
*they make progress on one of my assessments, entry
or exit cards and when I see them apply it to one of
their assignments or situations in their general
education setting.*

Results: All Respondents (n=269)

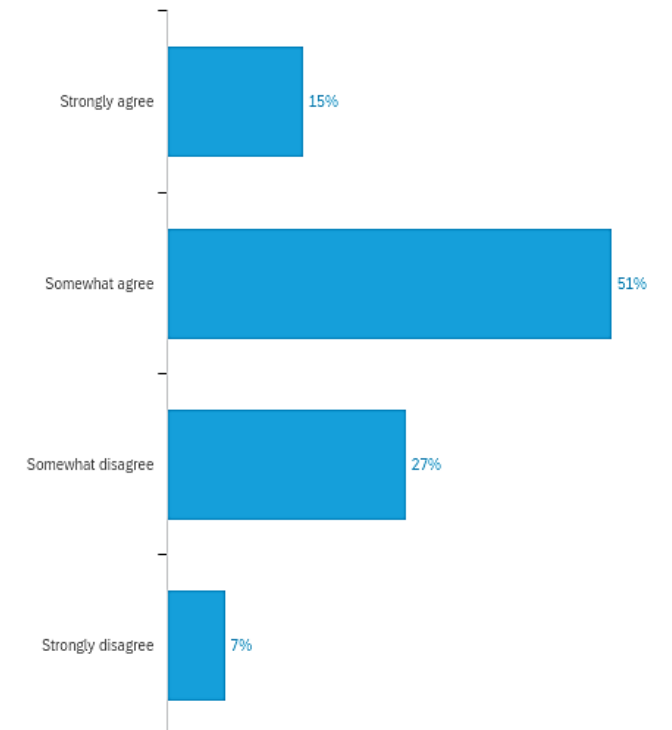
I provide clear written and/or verbal learning targets (or learning objectives) for my students



I provide clear performance expectations (written and/or verbal) for my students.

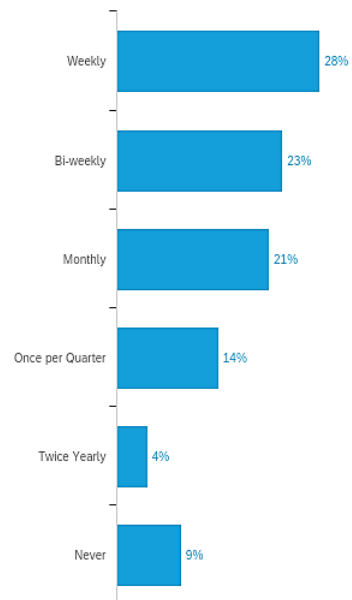


My students need to demonstrate proficiency on a specific set of learning targets (or learning objectives) to move forward to the next learning opportunity.

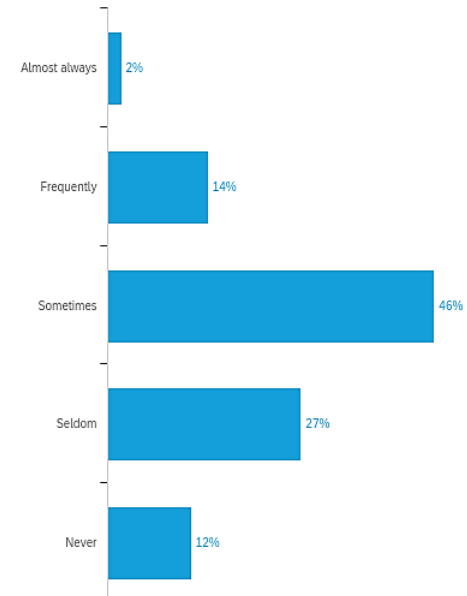


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

Typically, I meet with individual students regarding their progress:

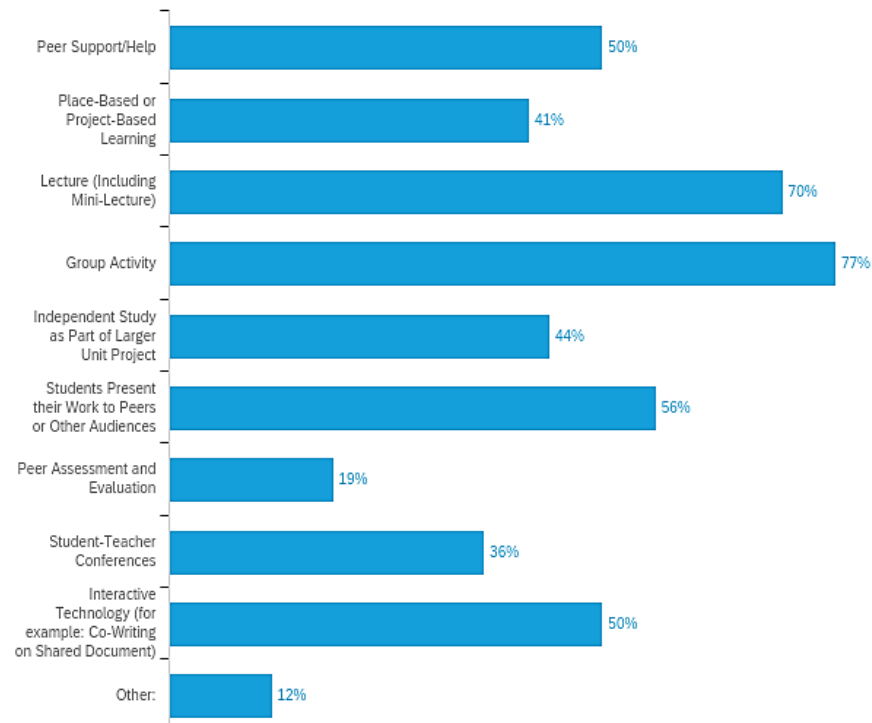


My students co-design with me their own learning experiences:

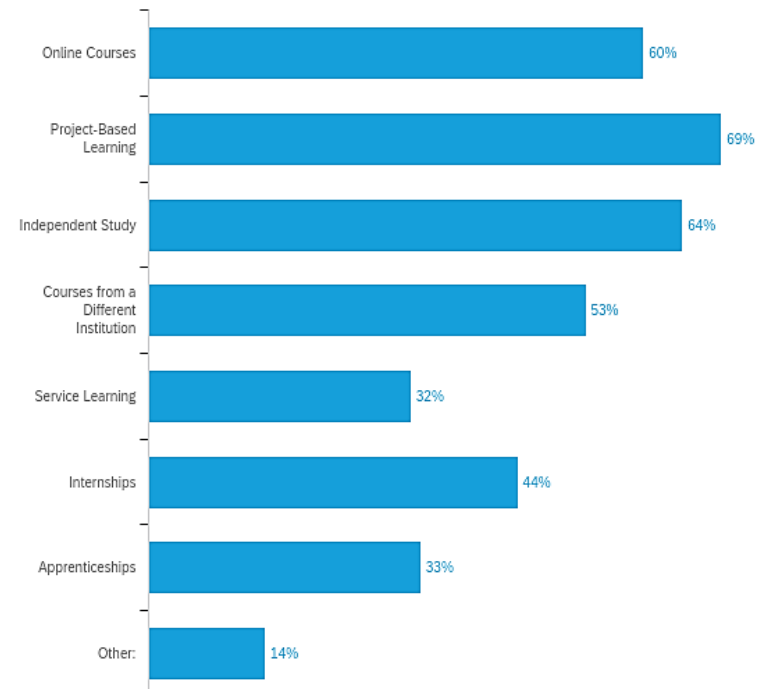


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

Typically, I use the following instructional practices at least once per week:

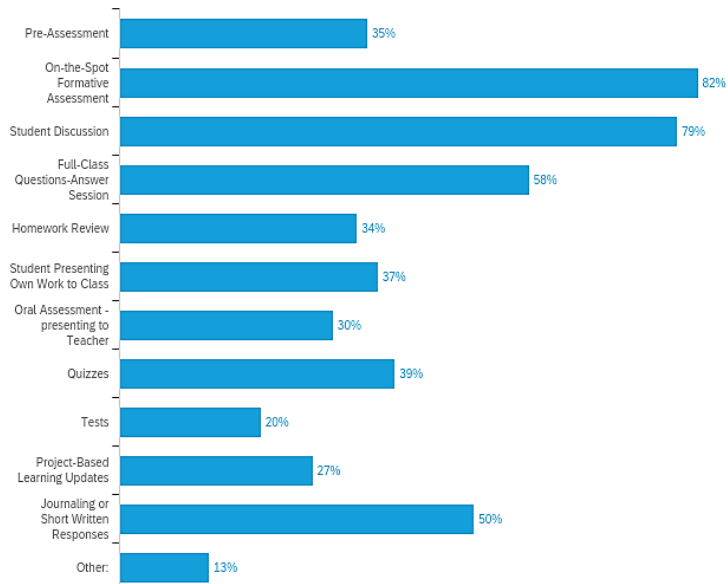


At my school it is possible for students to demonstrate proficiency through flexible pathways including:

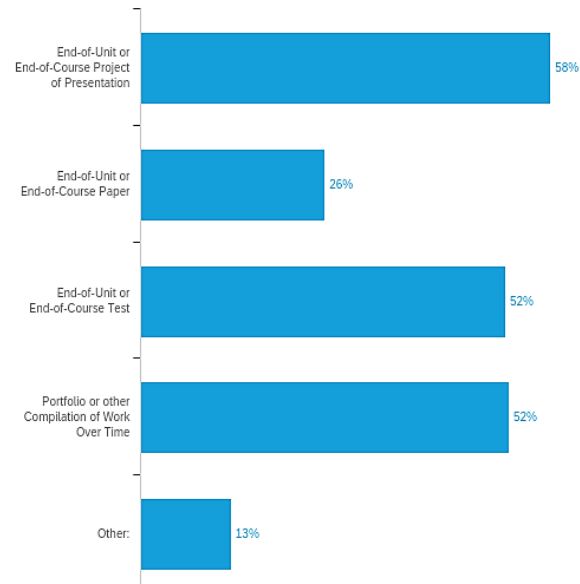


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

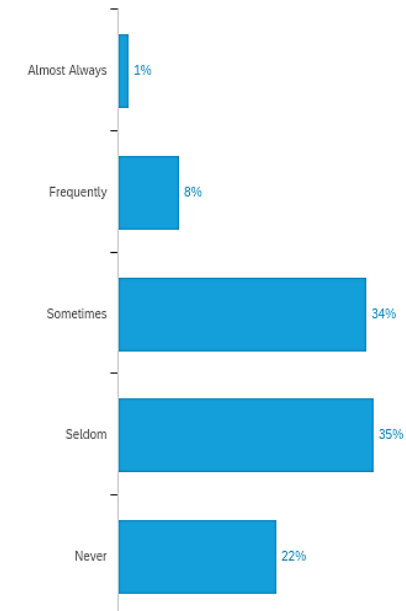
Typically, I use the following strategies to assess student learning at least once a week:



My students demonstrate proficiency through:

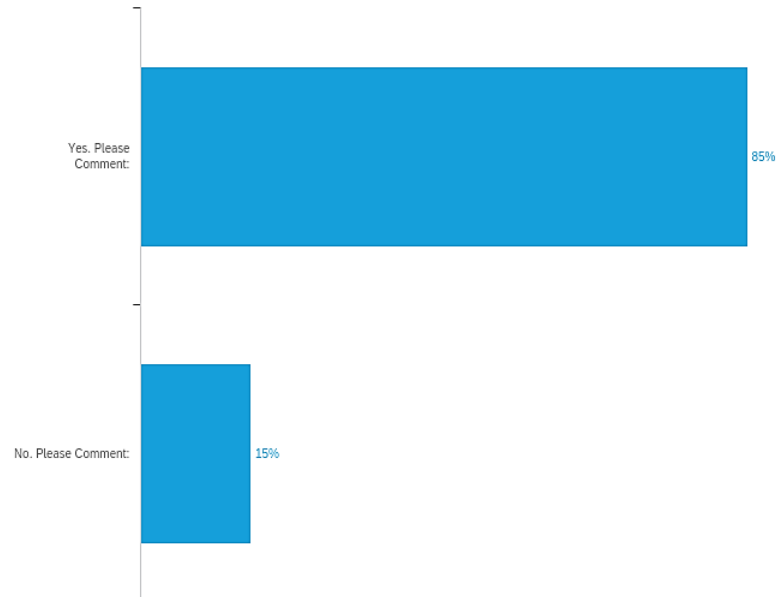


My students design their own demonstrations of proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc):

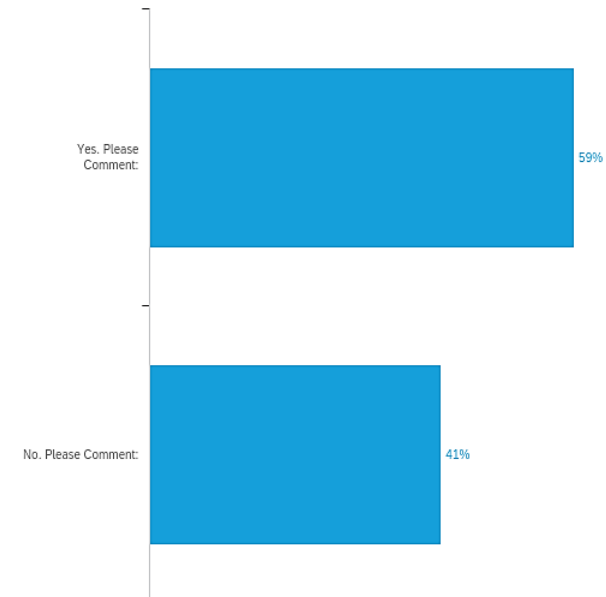


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

My students are allowed to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency:

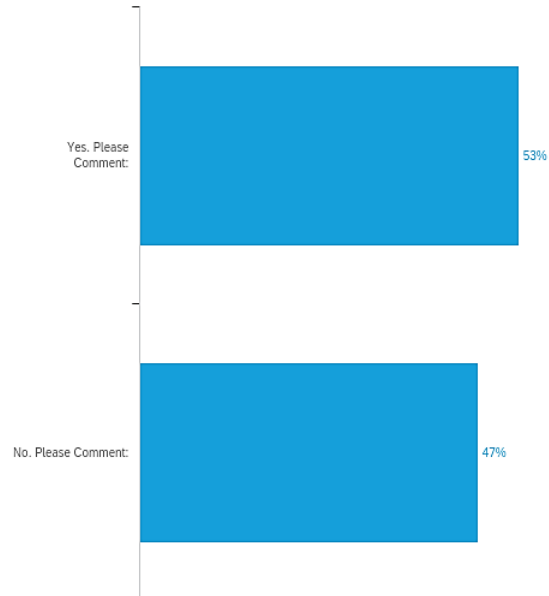


I use the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of the learning pathway, to evaluate all students:

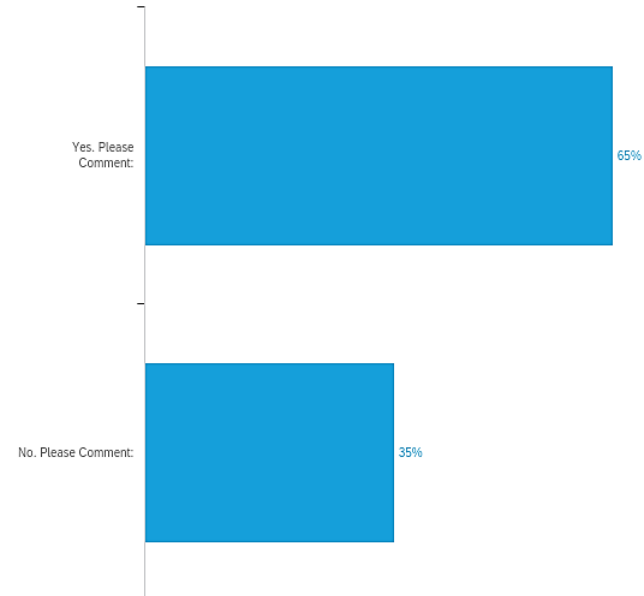


Results: All Respondents (n=269)

I use the same standards and performance expectations to evaluate all of my students, including English and/or dual language learners and students on plans:

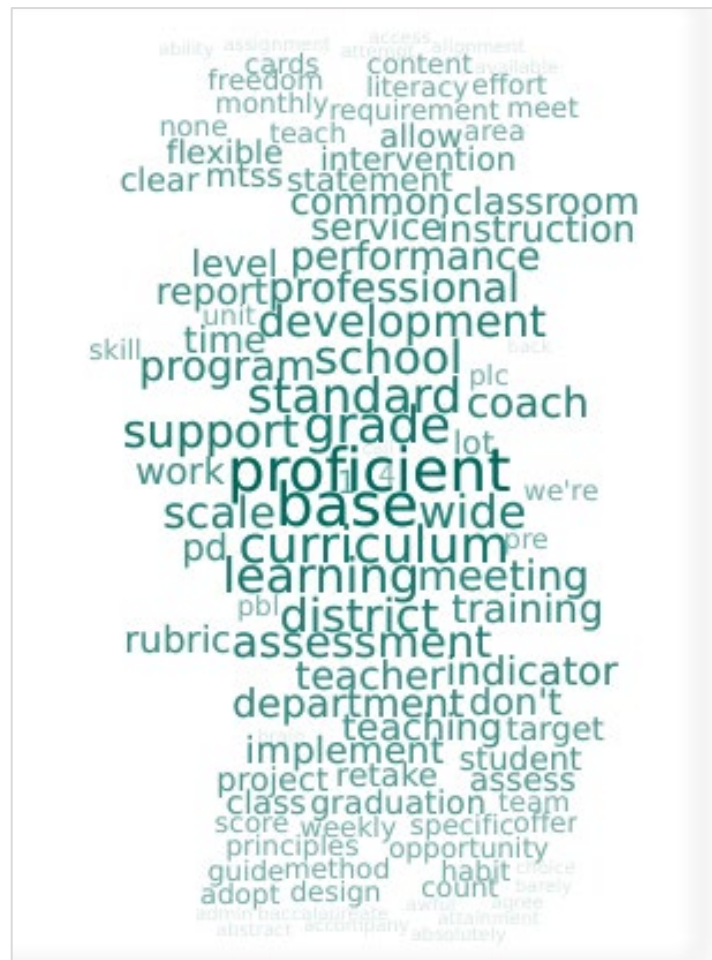


My students are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway:



Results: All Respondents (n=269)

School policies or practices that support teacher efforts to implement proficiency-based principles:



The superintendent and the curriculum coordinator are absolutely devoted to PBE.

Professional development for teaching and assessing

Consistent standards and vertical planning

District-wide proficiency based reporting system

Common assessment and grading belief statements

Habits of learning scores are separate from learning scores

intervention and MTSS

Having a clear, simplified curriculum with power standards.

has a proficiency based report card

Admin support for mastery based grading

Flexibility to use a wide variety of teaching methods in the classroom

PD time dedicated to rubric building etc.

Proficiency facilitator at school

Curriculum work/ scope and sequence creation guided by a common leader who is an expert in the area.

Parent/Community Outreach

Teachers use the same Learning Targets for a course

Results: All Respondents (n=269)

School policies or practices that inhibit teacher efforts to implement proficiency-based principles:



We haven't clearly defined district proficiencies.

More community and parental explanation of new grading systems

reactive design decisions vs planning

Balancing individual learning needs with standards based assessments

Meetings often produce good ideas with no coordinated time for follow up.

Inconsistent messaging around how the assessment impacts the students progression through school

Need of more professional development around what this looks like

Tension between tradition and change (parents, students and higher ed want grades)

We focus on technical aspects such as software programs

proficiencies are assigned a number grade which can make a student who is learning a concept fail a class

Lack of common beliefs /philosophies

Appendix B: Survey Items

2021 UVM Educator Preparation Survey

Survey Questions

Welcome!

The purpose of this survey is to gather information about how Vermont teachers define impact on student learning in proficiency-based systems.* The information will be used to improve the quality of University of Vermont educator preparation programs and is part of data collection for national accreditation. **You are invited to participate in this survey because you are a currently employed teacher in Vermont.**

Results from this survey will be aggregated to protect respondents and provide a layer of confidentiality.

Individual responses will not be personally identifiable in any sharing of results. The summary data will be available on the UVM Department of Education web site and may also be disseminated more broadly through scholarly reports and conference proceedings. This survey has 22 multiple choice questions and 9 open response questions and takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. The potential benefits to you in completing this survey include influencing educator preparation and the opportunity to reflect on your professional practice as a P - 12 teacher. By completing this survey you agree to participate in this self-study. If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, you may contact Dr. Kimberly Vannest at Kimberly.Vannest@uvm.edu.

Some of the questions in the survey are multiple choice and some ask for short narrative responses. **We recognize that narrative responses require more work on your part, and we appreciate your willingness to contribute to deeper understanding of your professional practice in proficiency-based systems.**

*Using the Vermont Agency of Education's definition, in proficiency-based systems students know the learning expectations, receive personalized feedback and support as they work toward proficiency, and choose from flexible pathways to meet proficiency-based graduation requirements.

See <http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-proficiency-based-education-what-is-proficiency-based-learning.pdf> (<http://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-proficiency-based-education-what-is-proficiency-based-learning.pdf>) for the agency's full definition.

Some questions in this survey were modified from Looking Under the Hood... (Haynes, et. al. 2016)

About You

Are you licensed to teach in Vermont?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

This survey is for licensed Vermont teachers. Since you are not a licensed teacher, the questions will not be relevant to you. Thank you for your time.

What year did you receive your **initial** teacher licensure?

How many years have you worked as a teacher, including this year?

At what college or university did you complete your initial educator preparation program?

- ☐ University of Vermont
- ☐ Other Higher Education Institution - In Vermont
- ☐ Other Higher Education Institution - Not in Vermont
- ☐ Completed Alternate Pathway to Licensure (Not via a Higher Education Institution)

What is the highest level of education you completed?

- ☐ Bachelor's Degree

- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Additional Certification(s)
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other:

Please list your teaching license endorsement areas:

Endorsement #1:

Endorsement #2:

Endorsement #3:

Endorsement #4:

To what extent did you or did you not have opportunity to learn about proficiency-based systems during your preparation for licensure?

- ☐ Explicitly taught and modeled in **most** courses and field experiences.
- ☐ Taught and/or modeled in **one or two** courses or field experiences.
- ☐ **Not at all** a part of my educator preparation.

Beyond school or district sponsored opportunities, what, if any, professional learning about proficiency-based education have you undertaken? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Graduate Courses - Separate from Initial licensure
- ☐ Workshops /Seminars /Conferences
- ☐ Other:

Teaching Context

Please think about your teaching context *THIS* year when responding.

Which age group(s) or grade level(s) do you work with this year? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Birth - Age 3
- ☐ Pre-K
- ☐ Kindergarten
- ☐ 1st
- ☐ 2nd
- ☐ 3rd
- ☐ 4th
- ☐ 5th
- ☐ 6th
- ☐ 7th
- ☐ 8th
- ☐ 9th
- ☐ 10th
- ☐ 11th
- ☐ 12th

Which of the following best describes your primary content teaching area(s)?
(Select all that apply)

- ☐ English Language Arts
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Social Studies
- ☐ Art

- ☐ Music
- ☐ Physical Education
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ World Languages
- ☐ Computer Sciences
- ☐ Early Childhood
- ☐ Other:

What is your primary teaching mode this year?

- ☐ Online
- ☐ In-Person
- ☐ Hybrid
- ☐ Other:

Defining Impact

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

Please complete the following sentence: I know my students are learning when

Please describe in a few sentences what "student learning" means to you

Please describe how you know whether your instruction is making a positive difference for student learning

Implementing Proficiency-Based Education

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

I provide clear written and/or verbal learning targets (or learning objectives) for my students

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

I provide clear performance expectations (written and/or verbal) for my students

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree

☐ Strongly disagree

My students need to demonstrate proficiency on a specific set of learning targets (or learning objectives) to move forward to the next learning opportunity

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Somewhat agree
- ☐ Somewhat disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Typically, I meet with individual students regarding their progress:

- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Bi-weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Once per Quarter
- ☐ Twice Yearly
- ☐ Never

My students co-design with me their own learning experiences:

- ☐ Almost always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

Typically, I use the following instructional practices at least once per week
(Select all that apply)

- ☐ Peer Support/Help
- ☐ Place-Based or Project-Based Learning
- ☐ Lecture (Including Mini-Lecture)
- ☐ Group Activity
- ☐ Independent Study as Part of Larger Unit Project
- ☐ Students Present their Work to Peers or Other Audiences
- ☐ Peer Assessment and Evaluation
- ☐ Student-Teacher Conferences
- ☐ Interactive Technology (for example: Co-Writing on Shared Document)
- ☐ Other:

At my school it is possible for students to demonstrate proficiency through flexible pathways including: (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Online Courses
- ☐ Project-Based Learning
- ☐ Independent Study
- ☐ Courses from a Different Institution
- ☐ Service Learning
- ☐ Internships
- ☐ Apprenticeships
- ☐ Other:

Assessment in Proficiency-Based Education

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

Typically, I use the following strategies to assess student learning at least once a week: (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Pre-Assessment
- ☐ On-the-Spot Formative Assessment
- ☐ Student Discussion
- ☐ Full-Class Questions-Answer Session
- ☐ Homework Review
- ☐ Student Presenting Own Work to Class
- ☐ Oral Assessment - presenting to Teacher
- ☐ Quizzes
- ☐ Tests
- ☐ Project-Based Learning Updates
- ☐ Journaling or Short Written Responses
- ☐ Other:

My students demonstrate proficiency through: (Select all that apply)

- ☐
- ☐ End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Project or Presentation
- ☐ End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Paper
- ☐ End-of-Unit or End-of-Course Test
- ☐ Portfolio or other Compilation of Work Over Time
- ☐ Other:

My students design their own demonstrations of proficiency (assessments, performance tasks, etc):

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Seldom

☐ Never

My students are allowed to resubmit work without penalty until they demonstrate proficiency

☐ Yes. Please Comment:

☐ No. Please Comment:

I use the same standards and performance expectations, regardless of the learning pathway, to evaluate all students

☐ Yes. Please Comment:

☐ No. Please Comment:

I use the same standards and performance expectations to evaluate all of my students, including English and/or dual language learners and students on plans

☐ Yes. Please Comment:

☐ No. Please Comment:

My students are involved in tracking their own work and progress, regardless of the learning pathway

- ☐ Yes. Please Comment:
- ☐ No. Please Comment:

School Structures and Policies

Please think about your teaching context THIS year when responding.

Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that support your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles

1.
2.
3.

Please list up to three policies or practices of your school (or district/supervisory union) that inhibit your efforts to implement proficiency-based principles

1.
2.
3.

Closing

What suggestions do you have for higher education programs that are preparing students to work in proficiency-based education systems?



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